

United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

DIRECTIVE 4335.1

7/20/93

MERIT PROMOTION

1. PURPOSE

This Directive implements the U.S. Department of Agriculture's policy regarding merit promotion in the Competitive service.

2. REPLACEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

This Directive replaces APHIS Directive 4335.1, dated 6/20/90.

3. AUTHORITIES

- a. Federal Personnel Manual., Chapter 335.
- b. Department Personnel Manual, Chapter 335.

4. POLICY

- a. It is Agency policy to comply with all Federal and Departmental rules and regulations pertaining to merit promotion, as well as with the terms of any negotiated bargaining agreements. Promotions (including selections and training that could lead to promotion) in the competitive service will be based on merit. Promotion practices will support efforts to select the best qualified persons Without regard to political, religious, or labor organization affiliation or nonaffiliation; marital status; race; color; sex; national origin; nondisqualifying physical or mental handicap; or age; and will be based solely on job related criteria.
- b. This policy covers promotions through GS/GM-15 or similar pay schedules and any prevailing rate schedule in the competitive service. It does not require that vacancies be filled by promotion.
- c. The Agency will make the merit promotion regulations and related information accessible to all employees.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

- a. The Human Resources Division will develop personnel policy and publish information necessary to implement the policy.
- b. The servicing Personnel Office will carry out policy, regulations, and procedures. Regional, field, and other entities continue to conduct delegated merit promotion activities. The term Servicing Personnel Office means Human Resources Operations and these offices, as appropriate. Specifics are contained in the Personnel Manual.
- c. Supervisors and Managers will implement merit promotion policy and regulations, and make the Supervisor's Desk Guide accessible to employees. specifics are contained in the Supervisor's Desk Guide, which includes the responsibilities of supervisors and managers.
- d. Employees in the merit promotion process will:
 - (1) Update qualifications in their Official Personnel Folders as changes occur in order to ensure records are current and accurate.
 - (2) Follow application procedures as stated in the vacancy announcements in order to receive adequate consideration for the positions.
 - (a) Unless otherwise specified, employees are encouraged (but not required) to use supplemental statements when responding to the evaluation criteria contained in vacancy announcements.
 - (b) Employees applying for promotion or reassignment to a position with greater promotion potential must furnish performance appraisal information in the following order:
 - 1 Current rating of record.
 - 2 If none, the rating of record from the previous rating period.
 - 3 If neither of the above, an advisory rating.

Also, in lieu of submitting a copy of the rating of record, the rating and date of the rating of record may be entered in the remarks section of the application.

- (3) When absent from the office, consider advising someone (supervisor, co-worker, etc.) of positions they may be interested in applying for in the event a vacancy occurs, including when/how to reach them.
- (4) Comply with requirements of mobility agreements, memoranda of understanding, and similar documents relating to placement in the position.

6. INQUIRIES

Inquiries should be directed to appropriate internal administrative offices or the servicing personnel office in accordance with Agency procedures.

/s/Lonnie J. King
Acting Administrator